

Historic, Archive Document

Do not assume content reflects current scientific knowledge, policies, or practices.



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Office of
Governmental
and Public Affairs

50/22

Major News Releases and Speeches

U.S. DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE
NATHAN A. LARSEN LIBRARY

Sept. 16 - Sept. 23, 1983

OCT 6 '83

IN THIS ISSUE:

News Releases —

19 Indicted in Ohio Food Stamp Investigation

USDA Revises Grade Standards for Canned Sweetpotatoes

Genes Open Way to Longer Shelf Life for Soybean Oil Products

USDA Speeds Up Emergency Loan Processing

USDA Proposes More Changes in Packers and Stockyards Rules

Block Halts Ground Beef Distribution

USDA Agency Redirects Management Resources to High Priority
Research Programs

Fact Sheet on Overview of ARS Areas

USDA Transfers Foreign Livestock Disease Diagnostic Services

U.S. Sugar Import Fee to Remain at Zero Cents Per Pound

USDA Rates Large Area of Wyoming Free of Cattle Brucellosis

USDA Issues Final Rule on Increased Plant Variety Protection
Fee

240-17-7524

11/20/2011 10:00 AM

3022 ZHANG ET AL.

2. *Staphylococcus aureus*

Figure 2

News Releases

U.S. Department of Agriculture • Office of Governmental and Public Affairs

19 INDICTED IN OHIO FOOD STAMP INVESTIGATION

WASHINGTON, Sept. 16—Nineteen persons were indicted by a Cuyahoga County, Ohio, grand jury for grand theft totaling nearly \$126,804 following a two-month food stamp fraud investigation, U.S. Department of Agriculture Inspector General John V. Graziano said today.

Fourteen of those indicted were Cleveland and Cuyahoga County employees and four were spouses of employees, Graziano said.

Those indicted had not reported their income as city and county workers while receiving food stamps and welfare benefits. None would have been eligible for the benefits had their income been reported. The violations were detected by auditors from USDA and from the Ohio State Auditor's Office who conducted a computer match of state welfare and state government employee retirement files. The audit was performed with the cooperation of County Prosecutor John T. Corrigan and staff, and the Cuyahoga County Department of Welfare.

Indicted from Cleveland were: Maggie T. James, 12332 Saywell Ave., accused of illegally obtaining \$18,024.96; Rochelle Freeman, 6576 Maplewood, \$15,842.34; James Leavell and Delois Leavell, 10532 Author, \$13,086.46; Bernice Smith, 11728 Union St., \$11,879.96; Penny Robinson 2567 Woodhill Rd., \$8,592.06; Wilbur Grattan and Gwendolyn Grattan, 2276 E. 89th St., \$7,072; Resa L. Smith, 4391 Outhwaite, \$2,907.54; Juanita Smith, 623 E. 101st St., \$4,391; Sherman Manuel, Jr., 3444 E. 110th St., \$4,152; Fred Pritchard, 3223 E. 119th St., \$3,815; Julius Whaley, 13003 Hoy Ave., \$3,359.96; Carl Fletcher, 8710 Meridan, \$2,288; M.C. Lawler, 941 Parkway Ave., \$3,918; Edgar C. Jacobs, 3544 E. 118 St., and Anne Jacobs, 2176 E. 9th St., \$5,645.74; (Anne Jacobs was charged for an additional \$1,296.) Yusuf J. Luqman of 830 Helsdale, Cleveland Heights, was charged for \$4,348.21.

In an unrelated case, Lynnelle Hales of 8303 Medina, Cleveland, was charged with receiving \$16,184 in food stamps and welfare benefits for children no longer in her custody.

The maximum penalty for grand theft conviction is five years imprisonment and a \$2,500 fine.

Graziano said his staff last year identified Cleveland as one of the 12 major U.S. cities to be targeted for intensified food stamp program fraud audits and investigations.

During July, 1983, Graziano said, there were an estimated 1,157,800 food stamp and welfare recipients within the State of Ohio who recieved an estimated total of \$54,800,800 in food stamps. Within Cuyahoga County for the same month there were 196,331 food stamps and welfare recipients who received a total of \$10,126,021 in food stamps.

#

USDA REVISES GRADE STANDARDS FOR CANNED SWEETPOTATOES

WASHINGTON, Sept. 16—The U.S. Department of Agriculture has revised the U.S. grade standards for canned sweetpotatoes to promote efficient marketing of the product.

Charles Brader, a marketing official with USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service, said the revised standards, which become effective Oct. 17, were requested by the canned sweetpotato industry.

The requirement for "uniformly shaped" sweetpotato units has been dropped from the standards, and the method of determining uniform size has been changed. Uniformity of size previously was determined by comparing the second smallest sweetpotato unit to the largest unit, regardless of the size of the container, Brader said. Under the revised standards, 90 percent of the units, by count, must fall within the tolerance for uniform size.

The revised standards establish "whole and pieces" as a style of canned sweetpotatoes and require that not less than 50 percent of the drained weight of the product consist of whole sweetpotatoes.

Pathological and insect damage are included in the definition of blemishes, but do not affect the total maximum percentages allowed for blemishes.

The revisions contain simplified tables outlining grade requirements for the product. Brader said the format is designed to provide simple, comprehensive standards for industry members and agricultural commodity graders.

The Agricultural Marketing Service establishes grade standards and provides official grading for many food products. Use of the grading service is voluntary and paid for by the user.

#

GENES OPEN WAY TO LONGER SHELF LIFE FOR SOYBEAN OIL PRODUCTS

WASHINGTON, Sept. 19—Genes recently discovered in soybeans may provide the key to developing soybean oil and products that stay fresh longer.

U.S. Department of Agriculture researchers said breeding the new genes into soybean varieties would help curb off-flavors and objectionable odors caused by the breakdown of unsaturated fatty acids.

The major culprit behind these twin problems is a highly unstable ingredient in soybean oil—linolenic acid—said Niels C. Nielsen, a geneticist for USDA's Agricultural Research Service. Soybean oil is used in margarines, salad dressings and cooking oil.

Nielsen is a member of a scientific team taking two approaches toward remedying the soybean flavor stability problem. The team is headed by geneticist James R. Wilcox of the research agency's plant sciences unit located on the campus of Purdue University, West Lafayette, Ind.

The researchers are trying to blunt the bad effects of linolenic acid by (1) identifying genes that lower its content in soybeans and (2) identifying genes that inhibit the enzyme which breaks it down.

To help find such genes, Nielsen and Wilcox used the chemical ethylmethanesulfonate to cause mutations in the seeds of Century variety soybeans. A resulting mutant plant had beans low in linolenic acid.

Wilcox said two generations of offspring from the mutant plant possess the same low content of linolenic acid, indicating the trait is stable. Its content in the experimental lines ranges from 3.2 to 3.4 percent, compared with 8 to 10 percent in conventional varieties, he said.

Nielsen said that although reducing linolenic acid enhances flavor stability, complete removal probably is not desirable because "it is an essential fatty acid for human nutrition."

This nutritional concern underscores the importance of the second research approach—breeding soybean varieties with less lipoxygenase—the enzyme which breaks down linolenic acid, Nielsen said. The enzyme exists in soybean seeds in at least three forms: LI, L2 and L3.

Progress is being achieved in this phase of the research. Geneticist Theodore Hymowitz of the University of Illinois, Champaign-Urbana, has identified a line lacking LI. Similarly, team members at West Lafayette identified one lacking L3 from beans brought to Purdue from Japan by postdoctoral associate Keisuke Kitamura.

Nielsen and his colleagues then bred soybean lines which lacked both LI and L3, yet showed no detrimental effects in greenhouse and field studies. These genes have been incorporated into plants now being intercrossed with lines low in linolenic acid.

Subsequently, the researchers identified soybeans lacking L2.

The research team anticipates that similar mechanisms of inheritance will be found in studies of soybeans lacking each of the lipoxygenase forms now being conducted by Purdue postdoctoral associate Corrine Davis, with partial funding by the American Soybean Association.

If so, the team may be able to breed soybean lines lacking all three forms of the enzyme.

Genetic studies of soybeans aim not only at practical application but also at increasing basic knowledge of plant life such as photosynthesis, said Terry B. Kinney, Jr., administrator of the USDA research agency. How linolenic acid is formed in soybeans is of particular interest because it is a major fatty acid in chloroplast membranes of plant leaves where photosynthesis occurs.

Kinney said research that improves the flavor stability and thus the use of soybean oil would be even more significant if world production

of vegetable oil fails to keep pace with a continuous upward trend in consumption. When supplies are tight, the world cannot afford losses to rancid-damaged soybean oil.

#

USDA SPEEDS UP EMERGENCY LOAN PROCESSING

WASHINGTON, Sept. 19—Steps are being taken to speed up the delivery of emergency loan checks to farmers in counties eligible for disaster assistance from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Farmers Home Administration, Secretary of Agriculture John R. Block said today.

New equipment, extra office help and improved practices should cut by more than one-half the time between loan approval and check delivery, Block said.

A new computer network enabling the agency's 46 state offices to order checks directly from the USDA loan finance office in St. Louis will be plugged in during November. The system, under development for more than a year, will shorten the route from county to state to finance offices.

"This step should reduce the time it takes for a farmer to actually receive a check, after a loan is approved, from about three weeks to as little as eight or nine days," Block said. "I have instructed that completion of the network be given top priority."

Block previously had instructed the loan agency and its state offices to immediately begin hiring and training the additional temporary personnel that will be needed to handle the anticipated requests for disaster emergency loans over the next several months.

Emergency loan applications following a drought such as much of the country experienced this summer usually are filed well into the spring of the next crop season.

The agency usually can call on a reservoir of retired loan specialists of the USDA agency as well as former employees of the Production Credit Association and other sources for temporary help in times of emergencies. They normally need to be trained in current regulations and lending procedures, however.

"We are continuing to determine the eligibility of various counties for emergency loan status," Block said. "Farmers Home Administration state directors have been instructed to monitor conditions so that the designation process, while expected to take some time because of the vast area involved, can go ahead without delay."

#

USDA PROPOSES MORE CHANGES IN PACKERS AND STOCKYARDS RULES

WASHINGTON, Sept. 19—The U.S. Department of Agriculture is proposing its sixth and final group of changes to the rules governing USDA's Packers and Stockyards Administration.

B.H. Jones, administrator of the agency, said some rules will be consolidated and clarified and others which are outdated or no longer needed will be eliminated.

"We're proposing to consolidate a large number of regulations and remove those no longer needed or unduly burdensome," Jones said. "By doing this we'll help to clarify those requirements without lessening the protection provided under the Packers and Stockyards Act."

USDA is proposing to:

- Remove a rule setting out applicable provisions of National Bureau of Standards Handbook 44 dealing with specifications and requirements for livestock, monorail, and live poultry scales and incorporate Handbook 44 by reference;
- Consolidate and clarify requirements presently set forth in 16 different rules concerning scale maintenance and testing and weighing requirements into five rules;
- Consolidate requirements presently set forth in two separate rules pertaining to the inspection of records and property into a single rule;
- Consolidate requirements presently set forth in two separate rules pertaining to the disclosure of information into a single rule;
- Remove four rules pertaining to stockyard services because they are no longer needed or are unduly burdensome; and

— Retain in their present form six rules which are instructions for testing and using livestock, monorail and live poultry scales; a rule restricting the hiring of suspended registrants; two rules requiring the furnishing of information and providing for inspection of records and property; a rule requiring the filing of annual reports; a rule prohibiting livestock buyers from charging sellers a commission to buy their livestock; a rule setting forth records to be furnished poultry growers; and a policy statement defining insolvency.

The proposals are scheduled to be published in the Sept. 20 Federal Register. Written comments will be accepted until Nov. 21 and should be sent to the Packers and Stockyards Administration, USDA, Washington, D.C. 20250.

#

BLOCK HALTS GROUND BEEF DISTRIBUTION

WASHINGTON, Sept. 20—Secretary of Agriculture John R. Block today announced he has ordered an immediate halt to all distribution of ground beef processed by Cattle King, Denver, Colo., and Nebraska Beef Packers, Inc., Gering, Neb., which was earmarked for use in the federal school lunch program.

The action was prompted by reports indicating the ground beef may have come from substandard cattle and may have been processed under less than sanitary conditions. The U.S. Department of Agriculture estimates there are 6.4 million pounds currently in distribution channels.

Block said routine USDA samples from those facilities since October 1981 indicate no health threat, and no reports of illness associated with beef from the two plants.

"In the interest of public safety and confidence in the meat supply," Block said, "I have ordered the detention, testing and investigation of these products. Commodities approved for the school lunch program have always been of the highest quality and it is imperative to take these steps as another indication of the government's commitment to maintain such standards."

USDA's Food Safety and Inspection Service already is analyzing samples from 14 locations across the country for foreign matter, chemical residues and spoilage. Block said results from those analyses would be available within a few days.

#

USDA AGENCY REDIRECTS MANAGEMENT RESOURCES TO HIGH PRIORITY RESEARCH PROGRAMS

WASHINGTON, Sept. 20—The U.S. Department of Agriculture's chief science agency will redirect \$6.3 million and 216 positions from management operations to high priority research programs, Secretary John R. Block announced today.

"By shifting scarce resources from overhead to research, the USDA's Agricultural Research Service will be better able to focus its efforts on significant national goals," Block said. "The new management organization is fully in the spirit of increasing the effectiveness and efficient use of our resources."

Orville G. Bentley, USDA's assistant secretary for science and education, said the streamlining of the research agency's management operations will begin this October and be completed within a year.

Bentley said another objective of the realignment is to allow the agency's regional and area managers more time to interact with cooperators at universities, state agricultural experiment stations and industry on research programs, planning and priority setting.

Terry B. Kinney, Jr., administrator of the agency, said the upcoming changes are the latest in an ongoing organizational realignment initiated last year to help strengthen research efforts.

First, the agency reorganized its national program staff, reducing positions from 130 to 78 and redirecting \$1.8 million toward research programs. Second, it reduced headquarters management staffs by about 90 positions, redirecting the resulting savings of \$2.4 million to research.

Kinney said the new round of restructuring will result in a consolidation of administrative offices and areas and will introduce new management efficiencies within the agency. There will be fewer but larger geographical areas when the present 25 area and center offices are consolidated into 11 areas, he said.

It is the agency's intention that savings in funds and positions achieved by the reorganization be reallocated to research projects in the geographical areas where the savings were generated, Kinney emphasized.

Kinney outlined six basic changes in the research agency's management operations.

- Instituting an Administrator's Council to serve as the agency's executive body. Kinney and nine key agency managers will consider major policies and decisions concerning the direction of agricultural research programs, federal, state and private cooperation, and management of planning, budgeting, staffing and other activities.

- Establishing a deputy administrator (now called regional administrator) in each of the agency's four regions to provide broad-based program leadership.

Their roles and responsibilities will be significantly expanded. Serving as an extension of the Office of the Administrator, they will conduct key assignments for the agency, nationally and regionally. They will supervise research at areas in the regions and oversee shifts in emphasis in accordance with the agency's program plan unveiled earlier this year.

Each regional office will be staffed with 13 persons. This reorganization of the four offices will result in the redirection of about 20 positions and \$700,000 from overhead to research.

- Reducing number of areas in the regions.

Consolidating the present 25 area and center offices into 11 areas will lead to improved management efficiencies for the agency.

Altogether, 11 area offices are scheduled to be discontinued while new area offices will be established in Denver, Colo., and Portland, Ore.

Although the new areas will be larger than now, they will remain within the present regional boundaries. This area realignment will save about 32 positions and \$1.5 million in overhead costs.

— Reorganizing administrative management in the field, incorporating three major changes to strengthen management while redirecting overhead to high priority research needs.

First, one layer of administrative support in the regions will be eliminated by performing former regional office functions in area or headquarters units.

Second, selected administrative management functions will be decentralized or centralized, as necessary, to best carry out activities that are national or regional in scope. For example, personnel and architectural engineering functions will be centralized at agency headquarters.

Third, field administrative personnel will report to a single office at the national level. Area offices will be delegated additional procurement, contracting, property, safety and fiscal authorities to carry out administrative activities as close to the client as necessary. This will relieve program managers of dealing with administrative details in order to concentrate on program development.

These changes will save over 130 positions and approximately \$3.5 million, which will be reallocated to the same locations where the funds were saved.

— Consolidating information functions. Information activities will be redirected in support of a national program emphasis. Research reporters in the field will report to national headquarters rather than to a regional administrator as now. Such functions as printing, editing, and audiovisual will be centralized. These changes will save 26 positions and \$600,000 in overhead for reallocation to research programs.

— Establishing new and expanding current research programs with resources accrued from restructuring the management operations. Funds and positions equal to those removed from an area office will be put into high priority programs at the same location.

Kinney said the agency will make every effort to relocate or place employees adversely affected by these actions. Employees unable to relocate will receive counseling and assistance. Reduction-in-force will be used only as a last resort, he said.

#

FACT SHEET ON OVERVIEW OF ARS AREAS

ARS has consolidated its 25 area and research center offices into 11 areas. Research at all locations where area and center offices are located will be continued. Following are the approximate total personnel, scientist years, and budget for the new geographic arrangement.

New Areas		Current Areas/Centers
Western Region		
Albany, Calif.*		Western Regional Research Center
Total Personnel	600	Western Human Nutrition Research Center
Scientist Years	226	Fresno, Calif.
Budget (in millions \$)	30	California
Western Regional Research Center, Albany, Calif.		Hawaii
Western Human Nutrition Research Center, San Francisco, Calif.		Pullman, Wash. Oregon Washington
California		Idaho
Hawaii		
Portland, Oreg.		Fort Collins, Colo.
Total Personnel	395	Montana
Scientist Years	164	Alaska
Budget (in millions \$)	23	Colorado
Oregon		Wyoming
Washington		
Idaho		Logan, Utah
Montana		Nevada
Alaska		Utah
		Arizona
Denver, Colo.		New Mexico

(Table continued on next page)

New Areas**Current Areas/Centers****Western Region—Continued**

Total Personnel	486
Scientist Years	166
Budget (in millions \$)	22
Colorado	
Wyoming	
Nevada	
Utah	
Arizona	
New Mexico	

North Central Region

Peoria, Ill.		Northern Regional Research
Total Personnel	499	Center, Peoria Ill.
Scientist Years	231	West Lafayette, Ind.
Budget (in millions \$)	25	Illinois
Northern Regional Research		Indiana
Center, Peoria, Ill.		Ohio
Illinois		Michigan
Indiana		
Ohio		

*Location denotes reporting office.

New Areas**Current Areas/Centers**

Ames, Iowa		National Animal Disease Center
Total Personnel	648	Columbia, Mo.
Scientist Years	229	Iowa
Budget (in millions \$)	30	Nebraska
National Animal Disease Center,		Kansas
Ames Iowa		Missouri
Iowa		

(Table continued on next page)

New Areas

Current Areas/Centers

North Central Region—Continued

Nebraska		Grand Forks Human Nutrition Center
Kansas		St. Paul, Minn.
Missouri		North Dakota
		South Dakota
St. Paul, Minn.		Wisconsin
Total Personnel	431	Minnesota
Scientist Years	216	
Budget (in millions \$)	24	
Minnesota		
North Dakota		
South Dakota		
Wisconsin		
Michigan		
Grand Forks Human Nutrition Center, Grand Forks, N.D.		

Southern Region

College Station, Tex.		Human Nutrition Research Center on Adolescence
Total Personnel	605	College Station, Tex.
Scientist Years	234	Texas
Budget (in millions \$)	32	Oklahoma
Human Nutrition Research Center on Adolescence, Houston, Tex.		
Texas		Southern Regional Research Center, New Orleans
Oklahoma		Stoneville, Miss.
Arkansas		Arkansas

(Table continued on next page)

New Areas**Current Areas/Centers****Southern Region—Continued**

Stoneville, Miss.		Louisiana
Total Personnel	790	Mississippi
Scientist Years	296	
Budget (in millions \$)	34	Raleigh, N.C.
Southern Regional Research		Tennessee
Center, New Orleans		Kentucky
Louisiana		North Carolina
Mississippi		South Carolina
Alabama		Virginia
Tennessee		
Kentucky		

New Areas**Current Areas/Centers**

Athens, Ga. Georgia		
Total Personnel	1,036	Alabama
Scientist Years	388	
Budget (in millions \$)	47	Gainsville, Fla.
North Carolina		Florida
South Carolina		Puerto Rico-St. Croix
Virginia		
Georgia		
Florida		
Puerto Rico-St. Croix		

(Table continued on next page)

New Areas

Current Areas/Centers

Northeastern Region

Wyndmoor, Pa.		Eastern Regional Research Center, Wyndmoor, Pa.
Total Personnel	774	Plum Island Animal Disease Center
Scientist Years	245	Human Nutrition Center on Aging
Budget (in millions \$)	39	Ithaca, N.Y.
Eastern Regional Research Center, Wyndmoor, Pa.		New York
Plum Island Animal Disease Research Center, Greenport, N.Y.		Pennsylvania
		New Jersey
		Vermont
Human Nutrition Center on Aging, Boston, Mass.		New Hampshire
New York		Maine
Pennsylvania		Connecticut
New Jersey		Massachusetts
Vermont		Delaware
New Hampshire		Maryland
Maine		Rhode Island
Connecticut		West Virginia
Massachusetts		
		Beltsville Agricultural Research Center
Delaware		Beltsville Human Nutrition Research Center
Maryland		

(Table continued on next page)

Northeastern Region—Continued

Rhode Island
West Virginia

National Arboretum

Beltsville, Md.

Total Personnel	1,396
-----------------	-------

Scientist Years	354
-----------------	-----

Budget (in millions \$)	55
-------------------------	----

Beltsville Agricultural Research
Center

Beltsville Human Nutrition Center

National Arboretum, Washington,
D.C.

Family Economics Research
Groups, Hyattsville, Md.

#

USDA TRANSFERS FOREIGN LIVESTOCK DISEASE DIAGNOSTIC SERVICES

WASHINGTON, Sept. 21—Responsibility for diagnosing foreign livestock diseases at the Plum Island Animal Disease Center will be transferred within U.S. Department of Agriculture agencies, effective Oct. 1.

Secretary of Agriculture John R. Block said today that diagnostic equipment and 35 employees at the high-security center located on an island off the coast of Long Island, N.Y., will be moved from the USDA's Agricultural Research Service to the USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.

"Since the primary mission of the research agency is research, it is appropriate that diagnosis of foreign animal diseases at Plum Island be conducted by the animal and plant health agency," said Orville G.

Bentley, USDA's assistant secretary for science and education.

Terry B. Kinney, Jr., administrator of the research agency, said some personnel at the Plum Island facility have been operating with overlapping assignments, some in research and some in disease diagnosis.

"In my opinion, this clearer definition of functions among government employees at Plum Island should further the management of this important USDA facility," Kinney said.

Bert W. Hawkins, administrator of the animal and plant health agency, said about 40 foreign diseases of animals are diagnosed at this geographically-isolated research facility. These include foot-and-mouth disease, rinderpest and African swine fever.

The Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service will continue to perform the present diagnostic functions.

These include diagnosis of foreign animal diseases, preparation of reagents for the diagnostic tests, adapting tests to field conditions, training scientists and technicians in the diagnosis of these diseases, and production and storage of vaccines, Hawkins said.

Bentley said the change in responsibilities will be accomplished by transferring existing personnel and funds from one agency to the other. Additional funding is not now anticipated.

Although the responsibilities will be separated in line with the missions of the two USDA agencies, the professionals at Plum Island will work together as a team, Kinney said.

#

U.S. SUGAR IMPORT FEE TO REMAIN AT ZERO CENTS PER POUND

WASHINGTON, Sept. 21—The import fee for raw sugar will remain at zero cents per pound during the October-December quarter, Secretary of Agriculture John R. Block said today. The fee has been at that level since last Oct. 1.

The fee for refined sugar, which under the proclamation is set at one cent above the raw sugar fee, also is unchanged, he said.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture is required to make a quarterly determination of sugar import fees under a presidential proclamation issued in May, 1982. The key factor in the fee determination is the domestic sugar spot price, as reported by the Coffee, Sugar and Cocoa Exchange in New York, during a base period of 20 market days. The base period for the coming quarter was Aug. 22-Sept. 19, inclusive, and the average price was 22.52 cents per pound. Since this was higher than the market stabilization price of 21.17 established under the sugar support program, the import fee is zero. If the average price was below the stabilization price, the fee would be the difference.

Block said U.S. sugar prices have been relatively stable for about a year and that this market stability was the result of the border control measures instituted by the president in May, 1982.

World sugar prices are still at uneconomically low levels, reflecting a continuing world oversupply situation.

#

USDA RATES LARGE AREA OF WYOMING FREE OF CATTLE BRUCELLOSIS

WASHINGTON, Sept. 22—All but a portion of west-central Wyoming has been classified free of cattle brucellosis, a U.S. Department of Agriculture official said today.

"Wyoming's application to be classified as two areas was reviewed and approved by USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service and a special committee of the U.S. Animal Health Association," said Billy G. Johnson, the USDA veterinarian who directs the national brucellosis eradication program.

"Wyoming is the first state to have a combination of class A" and free areas. Two other states—Florida and Texas—have two areas of classification, but each is class B and C.

"Wyoming was previously a class A state—meaning no more than 0.25 percent of its market-tested cattle were infected. A free rating means no known infection for 12 months or longer.

"Normally, an entire state is rated class free, A, B or C, depending upon its herd infection rate," said Johnson. "A state may have two areas of classification, however, if it can exercise the necessary controls over cattle movements between the areas.

"Since Wyoming has a brand law, it should be able to effectively control the movements of breeding cattle from the area that remains class A. This consists of Fremont, Hot Springs, the northern half of Lincoln, Sublette and Washakie counties.

"Now rated class free are Albany, Big Horn, Campbell, Carbon, Converse, Crook, Goshen, Johnson, Laramie, the southern half of Lincoln, Natrona, Niobrara, Park, Platte, Sheridan, Sweetwater, Teton, Unita and Weston counties," he said.

"Cattle from free areas or states may be moved without brucellosis tests if the animals are identified to their source," said Johnson. "Post-movement tests are recommended for shipments crossing state lines, however, because of possible exposure en route.

"Of the remaining states, in addition to Wyoming, Texas and Florida, 15 are class free, 21 are class A, eight are class B—meaning moderate herd infection rates—and three are class C—meaning relatively high herd infection rates—more than 15 infected herds per 1,000," he said.

"The U.S. Virgin Islands are class free and Puerto Rico is class B." Brucellosis, or Bang's disease, is an infectious bacterial disease that causes pregnant animals to abort or give birth to weak offspring. Herd owners suffer economic losses from reduced calf crops and lower milk yields.

Brucellosis can be transmitted from animals to people—especially those who handle infected animals or drink unpasteurized milk from such animals. Although highly debilitating, human brucellosis, sometimes called undulant fever, is treatable.

#

USDA ISSUES FINAL RULE ON INCREASED PLANT VARIETY PROTECTION FEE

WASHINGTON, Sept. 23—The U.S. Department of Agriculture has issued a final rule increasing the fee for plant variety protection to cover more of the costs of administering the program.

The increase, from \$750 to \$1,500, was put into effect on an interim basis last November and the public had 60 days to comment.

Thomas H. Porter, an official with USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service, said budget reductions and increased costs of operating the program made an increase necessary. The fee had not been changed since 1972.

Five comments were received on the increase, Porter said. Among views expressed was the belief that overhead of the plant variety protection office should not be a factor in establishing the fee and concern that the higher fee would make it impossible for public agencies to file for certification.

Porter said including overhead charges in the fee is compatible with the Plant Variety Protection Act.

The increased fee has not had an adverse effect on applications for protection, Porter said. In fact, he said, applications for protection have increased slightly since the increase went into effect.

Plant variety protection provides patent-like protection to developers of new and distinctive seed-reproduced plants ranging from farm crops to flowers.

#

